

District II Advisory Board Minutes

July 7, 2008

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The District II Advisory Board meeting was held at 7:00 p.m. at the Rockwell Library located at 5939 E. 9th Street. CM Schlapp was in attendance, (7) board members attended, (6) staff and approximately (20) citizens were in attendance. Only those individuals who signed in are listed as guests below.

Members Present

Joe Johnson
Max Weddle
Marty Weeks
Larry Frutiger
Daryl Crotts
Brian Carduff
Sam Jones

Members Absent

Aaron Mayes
Sarah Devries
Tim Goodpasture
Phil Ryan
David Mollhagen

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Nick Pompeo

Staff Present

Antione Sherfield, Neighborhood Assistant
Jess McNeely – Planning Department
David Warren - Water Department
Michelle Meyer – Water Department
Carl Hass – Public Works
Gary Janzen - Public Works

Guests

Listed below

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. DAB members did introductions. CM Schlapp welcomed everyone and explained how the DAB meeting is conducted. She advised that Chairman Joe Johnson runs the meeting as she likes to get feedback from her board on issues brought before them and feels that this is the best manner to receive that information. CM Schlapp also stated that she has received a letter of resignation from Youth DAB Member Sam Jones; Sam will be attending Kansas University in the fall and will not be able to serve on the District Advisory Board. CM Schlapp thanked Sam for his time on the District Advisory Board.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND AGENDA

The meeting agenda for July was approved **(10-0)**.

Errors in the June Minutes were identified by **DAB Member Larry Frutiger**; these errors will be corrected before minutes are finalized.

The meeting minutes for June were approved **(10-0)**.

STAFF REPORT

1. Community Police Report

No report provided.

2. **Property Tax Relief**

Brandon Kaufman, Finance Department provided information on the proposal to shift City Taxes: lower the property taxes and increase sales tax.

Background: The City of Wichita currently is financed in part by \$100 million annually generated from the property tax. The City does not currently have a city-only sales tax. The City does receive around \$50 million annually as a share of the County-wide sales tax approved by voters in 1985.

Analysis: Staff has developed a concept that could allow the property tax mill levy to be reduced from the present 32 mills to as low as 15 mill (a reduction of 17 mills). A proposed city-wide one cent sales tax would be used to offset the revenue lost.

Financial Considerations: The proposed concept is designed to be revenue neutral: increases in sales tax collections would be used to offset reductions in the property tax revenue.

Goal Impact: This project addresses the Economic Vitality goal by suggesting a taxing environment that could be more business friendly.

Daryl Crotts, DAB Member stated that he sees some positive things with the potential tax increase but as a Commercial Realtor he is concerned about how this would affect appraisal values. He also stated that Shawnee County did this two years ago and the Mill Levy is right back where it was two years ago.

CM Schlapp stated that the proposal has some components that need to be worked out before it is brought before the Council.

Brian Carduff, DAB Member inquired if this was revenue neutral as it is currently proposed to the general citizen home owner.

Brandon Kaufman stated that he believed this was a tool for Economic Development.

Joe Johnson, DAB Chairman inquired about elasticity.

Brandon Kaufman stated that businesses within the City limits would save on property taxes due to elasticity. He also stated this would give businesses incentives to move their businesses within City limits to save on property taxes.

Brian Carduff asked if this would impact the TIF Districts.

Brandon Kaufman stated that these are the initial discussions, but this would have to be considered because a TIF is an effective economic development tool.

Recommended Action: Receive and file.

3. **ZON2008-00010**

Jess McNeely, Planning Department presented information in reference to request for City Zone change from B Multi-family Residential and MF- 29 Multi-family Residential to LC Limited Commercial district. The applicant is requesting a zone change from B Multi-family Residential ("B") (Lots 1, 3 and the north 40.51 feet of Lot 5) and MF-29 Multi-family Residential ("MF-29") (the south 9.49 feet of Lot 5 and the north 8.51 feet

of Lot 7) to the LC Limited Commercial (“LC”) district. The application area contains approximately 0.4-acres with 128 feet of frontage located along Central Avenue, one block east of Oliver. These lots are developed with two four-plexes, one on each lot, built in the early 1940’s, with what appears to be less than five off-street parking spaces serving eight dwelling units. The applicant proposes the rezoning to allow for the highest and best use to allow commercial development.

The majority of residential development in this area is located between Bleckley Drive (west) and Pinecrest Avenue (east), along the south side of Central Avenue. This development consists of four-plexes, duplexes and single-family residences zoned B or MF-29. Most of these multi-family structures appear to have been built in the early 1940’s.

Property south of the subject site is zoned MF-29, and is developed with a four-plex, also built in the early 1940s. Property east of the site is zoned B and developed with single-family residences. Property north of the subject site, across Central Avenue, is zoned LC, and is developed with a fast food restaurant. West of the subject site, across Bleckley Drive, the property is zoned LC, and is developed with a retail strip center.

The subject site is located in flood zone AE. The AE flood zone is a flood insurance rate zone that corresponds to the 100-year floodplain that is determined in the Flood Insurance Study by detailed methods. Mandatory flood insurance purchase requirements apply. The waterway that flows through this area, the West Branch Dry Creek of Gypsum Creek, begins just north of Claude Lambe Park and travels south through the LW Clapp Golf Course before joining Gypsum Creek southeast of Hillside and Pawnee.

Jess McNeely stated that the Planning Commission has heard this item twice, once being deferred. The Planning Commission approved the request for “LC” zoning, subject to a protective overlay that would require a drainage study that would have to be approved by the City Storm Water team.

Tim Austin, Agent, stated that they were in agreement with the Planning Commission’s recommendation. He also stated that they surveyed the area and the buildings in the area are above flood elevation. He also suggested that they have a drainage plan if replatted.

Recommended Action: The **DAB** voted **(7-0)** in support of the Planning Commission’s recommendation to approve the request for “LC” zoning subject to a protective overlay.

4. Greenwich Road Improvement, between Pawnee and Harry Street

Carl Hass, Department of Public Works presented information on a project to improve Greenwich Road, between Pawnee and Harry Street.

Background: The 2007-2016 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) adopted by the City Council includes a project to improve Greenwich Road, between Pawnee and Harry Street.

Analysis: Greenwich Road, from Pawnee to Harry Street, is currently a two-lane asphalt mat road with drainage ditches. The proposed improvement consists of a five lane roadway with two through lanes in each direction and a center two-way left-turn lane with some landscaped medians where possible. Landscaping will be provided in the available right-of-way. The intersection of Greenwich and Pawnee will be developed for 5 lanes and left turn lanes in all four

directions. Signals will be installed if warranted at the time of construction. Drainage improvements will be included with the project. A five foot sidewalk will be located along both sides of Greenwich. Traffic will be carried on one-lane northbound only during the first phase of construction; one lane in each direction will be carried thereafter. The project is scheduled to be bid in spring, 2010. The planned eight months of construction is scheduled to be completed in winter, 2010.

Financial Considerations: The current estimated construction cost (exclusive of the special assessment funding) is \$4,200,000 to be paid by General Obligation bonds.

Goal Impact: This project addresses the Efficient Infrastructure goal by improving traffic flow through a major traffic corridor

The individuals in the audience had the following questions and comments: **(1).** How do you plan on replacing trees that will be removed? **Carl** explained that a landscape architect will be hired to beautify the area. **(2).** What time did the traffic count take place? **Carl** stated that it is a machine count that monitors all traffic through the intersection. **(3).** What control will you have over the contractors pertaining to large trucks destroying streets? **Carl** stated that they are not allowed to park vehicles on side streets and that will be monitored. **(4.)** How far will the road be from my front door? **Carl** stated that they did not have the final line yet, they are still in the process of configuring those lines. **(5).** Will you be taking any individual drainage problems into consideration? **Carl** stated that any drainage that comes into the right-a-way, they will design a way to get that water away from the right-a-way. He also stated that they are not responsible for any individual drainage problems. **(6).** Are you going to have a web-site updating individuals on the status of the project. **Carl** stated no, but you can feel free to contact him and he would provide updates.

CM Schlapp recommended that the DAB hear the item again once the final design is completed. **Carl** stated that the Consultants have a timeline pertaining to completing their phase of the project. By not complying with the timeline, this may cost the City more money in supplemental pay.

Recommended Action: The **DAB** voted **(7-0)** in favor to approve the project subject to the **FINAL PLAN** brought back before the DAB for approval.

5. Harry Street Improvement, between Greenwich and 127th Street East

Carl Hass, Gary Janzen, Department of Public Works presented information on a project to improve Harry Street, between Greenwich Road and 127th Street East.

Background: The 2007-2016 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) adopted by the City Council includes a project to improve Harry Street, between Greenwich Road and 127th Street East.

Analysis: Harry Street, from Greenwich Road to 127th Street East, is currently a two-lane asphalt mat road with drainage ditches. The proposed improvement consists of a three lane roadway with through lanes in each direction and a center two-way left turn lane with landscaping in the available right-of-way. The design will allow for ease of conversion to five lanes in the future, if traffic or accident counts warrant the need. Drainage improvements will be included with the project as well as a 10 foot bike and pedestrian path on the south side of the

street. Left turn lanes will be provided at all four approaches to the Harry Street and 127th Street intersection. Signals will be installed at the intersection if warranted at the time of construction. One half of the Harry Street traffic will be closed during the two phases of construction, a west portion while the east is constructed and vice versa. This will allow for minimum construction time for completion of the project. Detour routes are available through the developments on the south side of Harry; local access will be provided to all affected properties on the north side of Harry. The project is scheduled to be bid in spring, 2010. The planned 7 months of construction is scheduled to be completed in winter, 2010.

Financial Considerations: The current estimated construction cost (exclusive of the special assessment funding) is \$3,500,000 to be paid by General Obligation bonds.

Goal Impact: This project addresses the Efficient Infrastructure goal by improving traffic flow through a major traffic corridor.

The individuals in the audience had the following questions and comments: (1.) Are you planning on lowering the intersection at Harry and Greenwich to assist with the drainage problems? **Gary** stated that they have not reached that point in the design as of yet but they will do whatever they can to assist. (2). You are putting in a 10ft bike path, will you be taking land from individuals? **Gary** stated that there will be some right-a-way acquisitions. (3). When you are talking about land acquisitions, will you be going behind the Tara Falls wall? **Gary** stated no, their wall sits behind the property line. (4). Are there any plans to assist with flooding of the creek on Harry St. near 127th St? **Gary** stated that everyone is aware of the problem and it is not being ignored. They have three different projects occurring in the area which should help with the flooding problems. Flooding is always an issue unfortunately. (5). Will you be taking out most of the trees near the creek? **Gary** stated that they are still in the design concept and does not have all of the answers tonight. (6). Will the bike path stop at 127th street? **Gary** stated that the bike path will stop at 127th street but with future development in the area it will more than likely be expanded in the future.

DAB Member Daryl Crotts asked why not four lanes instead of three lanes? **Gary** stated that four lanes don't do a lot more to carry traffic. They have noticed that four lane roads increase auto accidents 40%.

Joe Johnson, DAB Chairman requested if **Gary** could communicate with Neighborhood Assistant Antione Sherfield to see if a turn lane is required in the platting of Tara Falls Development. **Gary** stated that he would check on that.

Recommended Action: The **DAB** voted (7-0) in favor to approve the project subject to addressing drainage and water issues in the area.

6. Water Utilities 2008-09 Proposed Rate Structure

David Warren, Wichita Water Utilities Director, will present information on the proposal to increase water utilities rates, a step that is necessary to fund current and future system improvements.

Background: From time to time, the City Council must consider water and sewer rate adjustments to address the ongoing operating and capital costs associated with the operating the City's water and sewer utilities. Wichita's Water Utilities continues to make investments in our

water/sewer system infrastructure in order to expand the treatment, distribution and collection systems and keep pace with growth in the metropolitan area.

Additionally, the City Council approved a Water Supply Plan in 1993 to assure that Wichita would have the water it needs through the year 2050. The largest component of this plan is the Equus Beds Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) project. Staff estimates that the current Phase II projects will cost more than \$230 million making this the single largest capital undertaking in the department's history.

Rate adjustments are necessary to fund these critical capital improvement projects and to keep our debt-service coverage ratio above 1.2, a requirement of Water Utilities' bond covenants.

Analysis: The past five years, rate increases have been made in small increments but have not had a significant impact on revenue. At the same time, capital spending has been increasing. As a result, Water Utilities' debt-service coverage ratio has fallen from 1.98 to 1.2, the lowest percentage allowed by bond covenants. The extremely wet weather this year and last year has only served to further reduce water sales revenues.

Water Utilities generates half of its annual revenue in the peak water-use season (summer months) due to irrigation. Large amounts of rainfall in 2007 led to a revenue shortfall of \$3.5 million. Significant amounts of rain this year may lead to an even greater shortfall.

In order to provide the revenue necessary to maintain existing infrastructure, finance necessary capital improvements and provide an adequate debt-service coverage ratio, Water Utilities is proposing revenue stabilization and rate adjustments. Under the proposal, on Aug. 1, 2008, \$1 would be added to the base charge for each account. In addition, beginning on Jan. 1, 2009, the current water rate structure would be modified so that the water volume charges in Block 1 and Block 2 are increased by \$0.29 and \$1.28, respectively.

Water Utilities is projecting eight (8) percent increases in both water and sewer per year through 2010.

Financial Considerations: If the revenue stabilization and rate adjustments are approved, they will make Water Utilities' annual revenue stream less sensitive to weather. The eight (8) percent increases in 2010-2012 should also help the department maintain the ground it gains from the first two steps.

Legal Considerations: Law has approved the Ordinances as to form. City Council approval is required to implement revenue stabilization and rate adjustments.

DAB Member Daryl Crotts asked how many customers are there currently. **David** stated that there are roughly a 140,000 accounts but they serve around 450,000 people. **David** also stated the rate increase will raise \$140,000 a month. This will raise over a half million dollars throughout the rest of the year if the rate increase is approved by Council.

DAB Member Larry Frutiger asked where conservation comes into the equation interns of not using as much water. **David** stated that they developed the rate structure to send that conservation message. He also stated that water in Wichita is still a cheap commodity. The key to this issue is education; it will start with educating grammar school students about the importance of water.

Recommended Action: Provide comments.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:45. The next DAB II meeting will be Monday August 4, 2008 at the Rockwell Library.

Respectfully Submitted,
Antione Sherfield, Neighborhood Assistant

Guest

**Marty Rawson
Allen Lepperd
Charles Darby
Don Overstreet
Jay and Emily Keehn
Leonard Christmore
Patricia Brittan
Patricia Tammer
Richard Hearn
Rosam and Marty Rogerson
Julio Vega
Ed Wagner
Chuck Willis
Rebecca Kirby
Roger Ridlon
John Greenstreet
Tiola Meier**